

# making tracks

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## Pedestrian/Auto Underpass Built at Fresno City College

A railroad bridge and underpass for pedestrians and motor vehicles has been built at Weldon Avenue and the BNSF Railway mainline tracks on the Fresno City College campus. The underpass eliminates the need for pedestrians and motor vehicles to cross the tracks at grade level and provides safer access to the college campus. The grade separation construction project at Weldon Avenue is part of an ongoing statewide program to evaluate and improve at-grade rail crossings in order to eliminate hazards, enhance safety and prevent accidents and injuries.



*Pedestrian and Automobile Underpass at Fresno City College.  
Photo by Don Tateishi/Caltrans.*

## New Motorcoach Connections to San Joaquin Trains

There are now several new Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach connections to San Joaquin trains throughout the system. Below are short descriptions of each route. For complete information, including fares, full schedules and routes, and to make a reservation for the train and motorcoach, contact Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL or at [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com).

**CENTRAL COAST:** Motorcoaches leave twice daily from San Joaquin trains in Merced with stops in Los Banos, Hollister, San Juan Bautista, Salinas and Monterey. And, there are two daily return trips to trains in Merced. Southbound passengers take train #712 which originates in Oakland and train #704 which originates in

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## Motorcoach Connections

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Sacramento. Northbound, take train #701 or train #717. Motorcoach stops in the five cities are: 1480 Mercey Springs Road (McDonalds), Los Banos; Maple Street at San Felipe, Hollister; 300 The Alameda (Windmill Market), San Juan Bautista; Amtrak Station, Foot of Station Place, Salinas; and, Transit Plaza, Tyler & Pearl Streets, Monterey.



*Welcoming the Amtrak California Thruway Motorcoach to Benicia is Assembly Member Lois Wolk. Assisting her from the motorcoach are Dick Bush (left), of Amtrak, and Steve Miller, of Caltrans.*

**BENICIA:** Four daily Motorcoaches take Benicia passengers to Martinez to connect with southbound San Joaquin trains and there are four daily returning Motorcoaches to Benicia with train passengers. Benicia departures are at 7:15 am, 9:55 am, 12:55 pm and 5:25 pm. Motorcoach departures from trains in Martinez are at 10:15 am, 3:30 pm, 6:45 pm and 9:10 pm. Amtrak Thruway Motorcoaches stop in Benicia at City Park Transit Stop, Military West and 2nd Street.

**LEMOORE:** Passengers going to San Joaquin trains from Lemoore may now depart on an Amtrak Motorcoach at 10:25 am or 5:50 pm for a short trip to the train in Hanford. Passengers may board northbound trains for the San Francisco Bay Area (10:25 am departure) and for Sacramento (5:50 pm departure), and southbound for Bakersfield and the Los Angeles area. Returning Motorcoaches depart from trains in Hanford at 12:15 pm and 8:25 pm. The Motorcoach Stop is at the Lemoore Chamber of Commerce office, 300 E Street.

**SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA:** A direct Motorcoach connection to San Joaquin trains in Stockton is now available to residents of Palo Alto, Mountain View and Sunnyvale. Departure times to the trains are Palo Alto 8:00 am, 10:40 am, 1:35 pm and 3:30 pm; Mountain

View 8:20 am, 11:00 am, 1:55 pm and 3:55 pm; Sunnyvale 8:30 am, 11:10 am, 2:05 pm and 4:05 pm. Motorcoaches stop at Caltrain Stations in each city: 95 University Avenue, Palo Alto; W. Evelyn Avenue at View Street, Mountain View; and, Evelyn Avenue at South Frances Street, Sunnyvale.

**ADDITIONAL MOTORCOACH SERVICE:** Two Motorcoach routes to and from San Joaquin trains in Bakersfield have had a second roundtrip Motorcoach added to the service. One route is Indio, departing for the train at 7:00 am and 9:30 am from Highway 111 and Monroe Avenue; Palm Desert, 7:25 am and 9:55 am from Town Center Mall, Monterey Avenue at Hahn Street; Palm Springs, 8:00 am and 10:30 am, Palm Springs Airport, 3400 Tahquitz Canyon Way; and Beaumont, 8:30 am and 11:00 am, Civic Center Parking Lot, 6th Street at Orange Avenue. The second route with additional service to and from the train in Bakersfield is Hemet, departing at 8:00 am and 10:35 am from Simpson Center, 308 E. Devonshire, and 8:10 am and 10:45 am from Coco's Family Restaurant, 3246 West Florida Avenue; Perris, International House of Pancakes, 1688J North Perris Blvd. at 8:35 am and 11:10 am; and Moreno Valley, 8:50 am and 11:25 am, AM/PM, 2624 East Alesando Blvd.

Reservations on all San Joaquin trains and Thruway Motorcoaches are required. Passengers must hold a ticket for both the train and the Motorcoach before boarding. Local passengers are not carried on Amtrak Thruway Motorcoaches.



*Cutting the ceremonial ribbon to inaugurate Amtrak California Thruway Motorcoach Service between San Juan Bautista and San Joaquin trains in Merced are San Juan Bautista Council Member Dan Reed and City Manager Jennifer Coile. With them are Caltrans Division of Rail representatives Eric Schatmeier and Chuck Wittig (holding ribbon at left) and Cindy Camara (second from left) and Patsy Hall (right), both of Amtrak.*





*Photo by Dick Friedman*

## Restored Fresno Amtrak Station Now Open

Amtrak is now operating from the historic Fresno Santa Fe Depot building with larger, more efficient passenger ticketing facilities and waiting areas to better serve the public. At a public ceremony on November 19, 2005, state and local officials turned the building key over to Amtrak, signifying the start of a new era in passenger travel from a facility with deep roots in Fresno history.

The station is located at 2650 Tulare Street. In addition to the new and enlarged passenger ticketing and waiting areas, there is a large ticket counter, business offices and adjacent retail space. Surrounding the station is new landscaping, increased automobile parking, and better access to the facility for buses, taxis and pedestrians.

The station now has the appearance of its original California Mission-style when it first opened in 1899. Fresno Station is one of only a few Mission-style buildings constructed prior to 1900 that is still in existence. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the rehabilitated San Fe Depot is an attractive addition to Fresno's revitalized downtown.

The station serves 12 daily Amtrak California San Joaquin passenger trains, six northbound and six southbound. Northbound from Fresno, trains stop in Madera, Merced, Turlock/Denair, Modesto and Stockton, with four continuing to Antioch, Martinez, Richmond, Emeryville and Oakland with a Motorcoach connection to San Francisco, and two traveling from Stockton to Lodi and Sacramento. Southbound, all six San Joaquin trains from Fresno stop in Hanford, Corcoran, Wasco and Bakersfield. Motorcoaches take passengers from Bakersfield to Southern California destinations, including Los Angeles Union Station where they may connect to Pacific Surfliner trains for Orange County and San Diego.

## More Record Ridership on California Trains

Amtrak California's Pacific Surfliner and San Joaquin trains recorded the highest September ridership in the history of the services.

Total ridership on Pacific Surfliner trains in September was 218,015 passengers, up 13.7% from the same month last year, and the seventh consecutive month of record high ridership. Some destinations along the train's route showed significant gains including San Luis Obispo, where passengers on arriving and departing trains were up 98.6%, Lompoc/Surf up 61.6%, Moorpark 50.5% gain, and Guadalupe/Santa Maria that showed a 46.4% increase. Passengers making the trip between Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo increased by 254.3% over the previous year.

San Joaquin trains carried 61,559 passengers in September, an increase of 15.1% over September 2004 and highest September in the train's history. Some significant ridership gains were shown to and from Turlock/Denair, where passenger traffic increased by 42.7%, Stockton up 42.6%, Richmond 29.0%, Fresno 17.9% and Hanford 17.2%.

Operating under the Amtrak California banner, intercity trains in the state are a partnership between California Department of Transportation and Amtrak. Each year state-supported services carry 4 million passengers to 200 destinations throughout California.

# Exploring Historic Monterey



*Colton Hall, Monterey. Photo courtesy of Monterey County CVB*

*Monterey Bay Aquarium. Photo courtesy of Monterey Bay Aquarium*

*Sea Otter. Photo courtesy of Monterey County CVB*



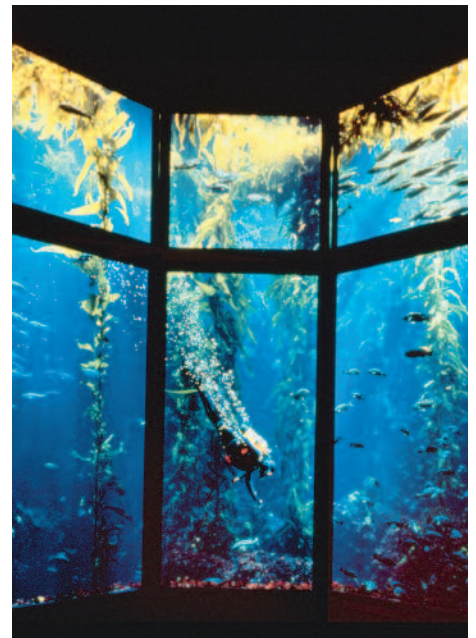
Nestled between rocky-mountains and the crashing waves of the Pacific Ocean, Monterey is a Central Coast city with spectacular views and rich history that everyone can enjoy. Many of Monterey's points of interest are within walking distance or reachable by local transportation.

Amtrak California travelers now have an easy and convenient way of getting to Monterey. Take a San Joaquin train to Merced and transfer to the recently inaugurated Central Coast Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach that provides direct service to Monterey. Your Amtrak Motorcoach leaves you off at the downtown Transit Plaza, at Tyler and Pearl Streets.

Monterey's Path of History offers visitors a chance to view a number of restored buildings, museums and points of interest in the heart of Old Monterey. Yellow, circular markers embedded in the sidewalk mark the Path so a visitor can begin anywhere along the way.

Some interesting sites along the route include:

- Royal Presidio Chapel, known today as San Carlos Cathedral, is the oldest building in Monterey County. Built in 1794, it continues in use and is a National Historic Landmark.
- Colton Hall Museum, at Pacific and Jefferson Streets, is where California's first Constitutional Convention was held in 1849.
- The Old Custom House in downtown Monterey, constructed in 1822, is also registered as a National Historic Landmark.
- The Monterey Museum of Art includes California art and photography, including the works of Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, Asian art and international folk art.
- The Monterey State Historic Park has a collection of buildings and adobes that represent some of the oldest structures on the West Coast.



And, don't miss the Monterey Bay Aquarium. You will marvel as you discover the beauty of the oceans of the world as you wonder through the exhibitions. There are more than 30,000 ocean animals, including penguins, sea otters, sharks, jellies, sea turtles, dragons and barracuda. A new exhibit, called "Ocean's Edge," opened this year.

If your trip to Monterey is in April, you will want to include the Monterey Jazz Festival (April 21-23), the world's oldest running jazz festival and featuring "Next Generation Festival," that showcases national high school talent.



# Historic Benicia

With Amtrak California Thruway Motorcoach service now available from San Joaquin trains, historic downtown Benicia is a unique place to visit. You will enjoy the charming buildings with Victorian and early California architecture in the downtown district. Benicia was founded in 1847 on land purchased from General Mariano Vallejo for \$100 and named after his wife.

You will leave the Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach at City Park on Military West near First Street. Take a walk down First Street and you will see and visit some interesting and historic buildings.

The first Masonic Temple built in California is located at 110 West J Street, near the corner of First Street. Built in 1850, the Temple is still in use and on the National Register of Historic Places. The second floor contains the original woodwork by California's early craftsmen.

Across First Street on the corner of First and East J Street is St. Paul's Episcopal Church, built in 1859, and next to it, at 122 East J Street, St. Paul's Rectory. The Rectory was built in 1790 in Connecticut, dismantled and shipped around the horn to Benicia. It has the original fireplace and staircase. The Church was the first Episcopal Cathedral in Northern California and California redwood was used in the construction.

At First and West G Streets you will find a brick building constructed in 1852 for use as the Benicia City Hall. The building served as the State Capitol for 13 months, in 1853-54, when Benicia was California's third capital. It has been completely restored by the California State Department of Parks and Recreation and is now a State Historical Park.

The Fisher-Hanlon House & Gardens, located at 137 West G Street, served as a hotel during the Gold Rush.

It was moved to its present location and restored after a fire in 1856. The house and gardens are open to the public on weekends.

Enroute to the waterfront, take a look at two buildings along First Street. The buildings between East C and D Streets served as tanneries, with one-third of all leather processed in California at this site. And, 100 First Street is the original site of the Jurgensen Saloon, a favorite haunt of Jack London. Two of his books, "Tales of the Fish Patrol" and "John Barleycorn" were based on his experiences in the area.

At the end of First Street is the original site of the Southern Pacific Depot. Originally built in 1887, it was moved to Benicia in 1902 and used as a passenger and freight station on the transcontinental railroad until 1930. It included a waiting room, office and freight house. Rehabilitated in 2001, the depot now houses the Benicia Main Street Program and is open to the public.



*Jefferson Street Mansion has been fully restored to pre-Civil War gradeur. Visitors may take a tour of the mansion, which is also used for weddings and receptions. Courtesy of Eileen Fahy Photography*

## Take San Joaquin Trains To and From UC Merced

Matriculating at UC Merced? When it's time for a weekend trip home, a trip to visit friends, or any trip to and from school, take Amtrak California's San Joaquin.

San Joaquin trains and connecting Amtrak Thruway Motorcoaches take passengers to just about anywhere in the state without the hassle of driving. There is no easier or more economical way to get there and back.

Aboard the train you can sit back and relax, catch up on homework, have a snack or just listen to some good music. The trains are comfortable and have plenty of room to haul your stuff.

Between the UC Merced campus and the Merced Amtrak Station take CatTracks shuttle, which is free for students. Take shuttle route E from Scholars Lane and Muir Pass to downtown. On Friday, the shuttle leaves every hour between 6 pm and 11 pm (on the hour) and on Saturday and Sunday between 9 am and 11 pm (on the hour.) The Amtrak Station is just 26 minutes from the campus on the shuttle.

For full information on the shuttle call 209/381-6981 or visit [www.taps.ucmerced.edu](http://www.taps.ucmerced.edu). For San Joaquin schedules and fare information call 1-800-USA-RAIL or visit [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com).

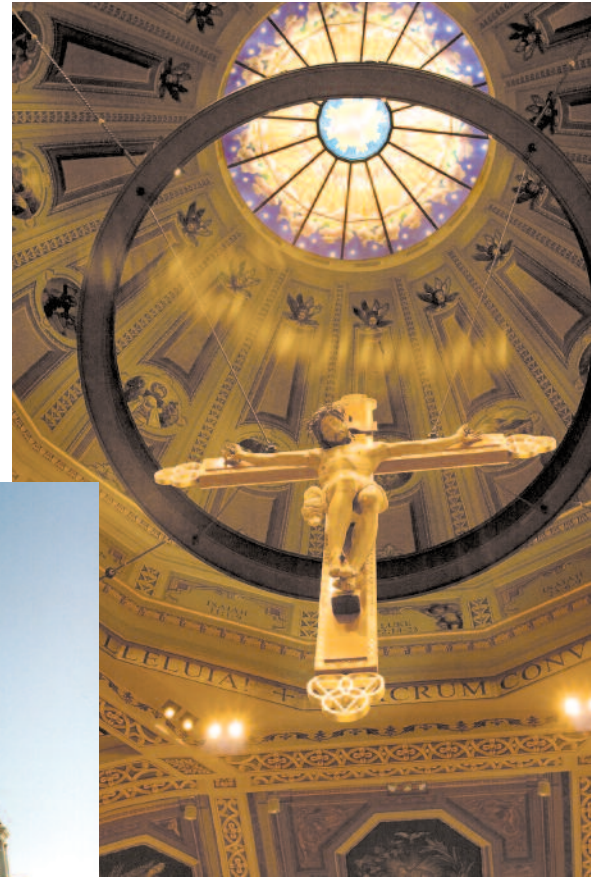
# Visit Sacramento's Restored Cathedral

Sacramento has the largest concentration of historic buildings dating back to the California Gold Rush of the mid-1800s. One of those buildings, the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, recently reopened following 27 months of restoration work.

Located at 1017 11th Street, just one block from the State Capitol, restoration of the 116 year old cathedral included brighter colors on the interior, restored artworks, new liturgical elements, and reopening of the 175 foot high dome, which has been closed off from view since 1932.

The cathedral was the inspiration of the Sacramento's first bishop, Patrick Manogue, who secured the property and directed construction.

For San Joaquin passengers visiting the state capital, the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament is a short walk or bus ride from the Amtrak Sacramento Station. Tours of the cathedral are offered on Wednesdays following the 12:10 p.m. Mass and on Sundays following the 9:00 am and 11:00 am Masses.



*Photos from Cathy Joyce, courtesy of the Catholic Herald*



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